

WOOD BURNING STOVES & FIREPLACES IN CHILD CARE HOMES Rules R430-90-12(4)(c), R430-50-12(4)(c)

When in use during child care hours, wood burning stoves and fireplaces must be inaccessible to children. This means that they must either be behind a child safety gate or an enclosure for child safety [See R430-90-2(6), 50-2(6)].

Crawling infants and toddlers are most at risk as they are too young to understand the dangers of a wood stove or fireplace and the word “no” is simply not enough.

The enclosure should be at least 36 inches tall. It should also be made of nonflammable materials that cannot be climbed on. Vertical rails or fine mesh can keep a child from climbing over the fence. The enclosure should also be placed far enough from a wood stove that a reaching child cannot touch the surfaces of the stove or fireplace.



Even with an enclosure installed, a crawling child or toddler should never be left alone unsupervised in a room with a wood burning stove or fireplace. Toddlers, especially, like to toss items over the fence. Heavier objects such as blocks could easily crack or break the glass front of certain models of stoves. Plastic items, should they go directly into a fire or reach the top of the stove, could easily melt and release toxic fumes into the area.

From an early age, children should be taught the dangers of a wood stove. It should be explained that fire is indeed hot and should not be played with in any form.